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RABAT FOR DCM BUSH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/2017
TAGS: [ETTC](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [VE](#) [MASS](#) [BE](#)
SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF BELGIAN EQUIPMENT TO VENEZUELA

REF: STATE 86440

Classified By: Political Counselor Theodore H. Andrews,
reasons 4. b/d.

¶1. (S) In response to Reftel, PolMilOff demarched both Belgian Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Walloon General Commission of International Relations (CGRI) about the reported recent transfer by Walloon defense contractor FN Herstal of Wassenaar-controlled T-100/200 sighting systems to Venezuela. DAO accompanied to meeting at MOD. Both MOD Chief of Staff Jean-Arthur Regibeau and CGRI Director Olivier Gillet confirmed that the government of Belgium had authorized the FN Herstal transfer of the above helicopter equipment to Venezuela, per a license dated November 2005, valid for one year, day for day. Regibeau undertook to try and learn the date of the shipment. Gillet pointed out that the date on which customs in both Belgium and Venezuela would have carried out the actual transshipment of the materiel however was not clear and could have been later than the expiration of the license.

¶2. (S) CGRI director Gillet, new in his position, said that he had received no/no notification from the EU Committee on Arms Control (COARM) regarding an official EU ban on arms shipments to Venezuela, but undertook to inquire about it. (Comment: COARM is meeting on June 22; however post does not know if Venezuela is on the agenda. End Comment) After much prompting, he agreed to inquire from FN Herstat when the above equipment would have arrived in Venezuela.

¶3. (C) Comment: Whatever the details, the message has been delivered. Post would appreciate more precision from Department with regard to the timeframe of the reported delivery. PolMilOff will follow up with both officials and seek clarity from USEU re official COARM position re arms transfers to Venezuela. Absent an official EU policy inhibiting arms exports to Venezuela, it is difficult in this federal state where the regions issue export licenses, to get the regions to act the way we want. End Comment.
FOX
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